

HISTORY OF SLOCUM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

AS READ BY CARL PETERS
SEPTEMBER 13, 2009
150TH ANNIVERSARY
1859-2009

1784 John Wesley founded the Methodist Church.

August 29, 1859 land was purchased from William and Ellen Brown for the sum of \$1.00. The purpose was to build a church. The Methodist Episcopal Church was built on the corner of Slocum Road and Schmid Road. The church was deeded to Benjamin Lear, Benjamin Vandermark, Abram Arnold, Steven Lee, George Moore, John Hawk, and Charles Stair. They were the trustees of the church at that time. It was deeded to them and their successors.

William H. Brader was chosen to build the church. The cost of the building was \$500.00.

December 1, 1860 the church was dedicated by Reverend Reuben Nelson. He gave the address. William Kealey was the pastor. The church was built on the land where the present Slocum Park stands today.

The church building served all denominations until each denomination could build its own building. It provided a space for worship as a union church, but was deeded as the Methodist Episcopal Church of Slocum.

On February 20, 1870 Charles Clark was ordained pastor in the Slocum Church. He was the great-grandfather of Reverend Carolyn Clark who served as pastor of the Slocum Church in the early 1990's.

In 1873 the Stairville Methodist Episcopal Church was built at a cost of \$1800.00. Reverend Josiah Wagner was the pastor at that time.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church was built in 1890. This is the present Faith United Methodist Church.

The Epworth League was formed at Slocum in the Methodist Episcopal Church on May 17, 1894. This league was the forerunner of the present Methodist Youth Fellowship.

A story told to me by my grandfather Frank Peters when he was a young boy: This happened at the old church site which is now Slocum Park. It was Christmas church service and Santa was passing out candy and oranges to the children. Santa bumped the Christmas tree lit by candles. It started a fire. All the people panicked and rushed out of the church. A bucket brigade was formed from the well of William Brown and they were able to extinguish the flames.

It was decided around 1907 by Winfield Jones, Stanley Stackhouse, and James Moore to dismantle the church and move it to its present site. The reason being there was no church at this end of the township.

June 1, 1908 land was purchased from Stanley W. Stackhouse and his wife Alice for the sum of \$40.00. The moving was done under the direction of William and Frank Stair. It was completed in 1908. During that time, church service was held in the schoolhouse next to our church. The church had no bell tower and it was decided to build one at that time. Oliver S. Weistner was the pastor in 1908. It was dedicated in 1909. Elsie Ogin said it was beautiful the day of the dedication.

The Men's Brotherhood was formed in June 1913. Their motto was "Do all the good you can, all the ways you can, for as long as you can". At the second meeting, it was decided to build a shed for the rear of the church property. \$15.00 was collected for this project. The Ladies Aide Society served lunch. This shed was used to house the horses during church services.

In the early 1900's, the home of Carrie Boyer was used to hold meetings, quilting, and suppers.

Inside the church in the early days were two bracket lamps with reflectors and were mounted on the wall on each side of the alcove. The main lighting was two gas lamps suspended by an iron rod which could be lowered and raised by a rope fastened to the wall. The heating was done by pot belly stove. The pipe ran through the center of the ceiling to the center chimney. Located in the alcove was a settee used by the minister and the presiding elder. We have that settee today behind the organ. The original pulpit is in the vestibule. The pulpit bible is dated 1868. The silver communion set is from around 1880. We have several old Methodist song books dated 1849 with only words, no music notes. Early Methodist discipline books and a book of John Wesley sermons dated 1844 are on the piano. John Wesley founded the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784.

Electric lighting was installed May 25, 1930. Additional repairs were made in 1936. In 1944 extensive remodeling was done with new pulpits, baptismal and enclosed railing on both sides of the platform.

In 1961 the first supper was served by the W.S.C.S. Ladies Society. My mother Hilda Peters was the president of the society.

In the late fall of 1968, I received a call from Tillie Ogin asking if I had the candy forms for the candy that the choir was selling. I told her the forms were at the church but I would stop at the church on my way to Nanticoke Hospital to see my father Winfield Peters. When I opened the front doors of the church, smoke was pouring out. I ran and got help. The Slocum Fire Company put out the fire. It was the oil burner which was in the church basement that caught fire. Everything was covered by black soot. I was meant to go to the church that afternoon. God was truly with us.

A central heating system was installed after the fire through the generosity of our good neighbor, Nelson Kovaleski.

In the past few years new windows and a public address system were installed. A new organ, lighted cross on the top of the steeple, new pew cushions, and new curtains have been installed. Also outdoor lighted lampposts and the church has been completely resided with vinyl restoration siding.

We have come a long way in the past 150 years. We hope to be here for many more years.

Thank you and God Bless you. May we remember all the past persons who have worked so hard to make this church what it is today!